

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7639

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 6345

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, MX

SUBJ: NULLIFICATION BY 49TH MEXICAN CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES OF
FEDERAL CONGRESS OF ELECTION OF PRI CANDIDATE AS FEDERAL DEPUTY.

1. ON AUGUST 25, 1973, THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE OF THE 49TH MEXICAN CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, WHOSE MEMBERS WERE ELECTED ON JULY 1, 1973, NULLIFIED THE ELECTION OF THE PRI CANDIDATE FROM THE 6TH DISTRICT OF PUEBLA (TEHUACAN) AND CALLED FOR A NEW ELECTION. THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE'S DECISION, WHICH SUPERCEDES A PREVIOUS DECISION BY THE FEDERAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION TEMPORARILY TO FREEZE THE CASE BECAUSE OF VOTING IRREGULARITIES, MARKS THE FIRST TIME THAT THE ELECTION OF A PRI CANDIDATE HAS SUCCESSFULLY BEEN CHALLENGED BY AN OPPOSITION PARTY, IN THIS CASE, THE PAN.

2. THE PAN CANDIDATE IN THE 6TH PUEBLA DISTRICT, VIRGILIO FLORES ARECHIGA, COMMENTED THAT IN HIS CASE THE ELCTORAL PROCESS HAS BEEN LIKE A CHESS GAME IN WHICH ONE MUST CONTINUALLY REPEAT ONE'S MOVES. HE ADDED THAT HE IS CONFIDENT THAT HE WON IN THE FIRST ELECTION AND THAT HE EXPECTS TO WIN THE NEW ONE.

3. A PRI SPOKESMAN COMMENTED THAT, ALTHOUGH THE PRI WAS SADDENED BY THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE'S DECISION, IT
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NONETHELESS RECOGNIZES THAT ABSOLUTE RESPECT FOR
JURIDICAL NORMS MUST ALWAYS TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER THE

DESIRES OF A POLITICAL PARTY. HE ADDED THAT HE WANTED TO MAKE CLEAR THAT THE PAN DID NOT WIN THE LAST ELECTION AND THAT HE IS SURE THAT THE PRI WILL WIN THE NEW ELECTION IN THE 6TH PUEBLA DISTRICT.

4. EMBASSY COMMENT: THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE'S DECISION SETS A PRECEDENT WHICH MAY RETURN TO HAUNT THE PRI. RATHER THAN A CONSCIOUS ATTEMPT TO IMPLEMENT PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA'S VAUNTED "DEMOCRATIC OPENING," THE DECISION PROBABLY REFLECTS A CASE OF ADVERSE PUBLICITY IN THE PRESS ABOUT AN ELECTION IN A DISTRICT IN WHICH THE PRI CANDIDATE WAS EXTREMELY UNPOPULAR. THE PRI UNDOUBTEDLY THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER TO HOLD ANOTHER ELECTION THAN TO FORCE AN UNWELCOME CANDIDATE UPON THE VOTERS.
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